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dered if the element of beauty did not entirely escape his attention. He did not, however, fail to imbue his portraits with personality. The people he pictured are not paper dolls, or mere effigies, but individuals with varied characteristics. The portrait of Mrs. Epes Sargent, Jr., painted in 1764, and reproduced herewith, is an excellent example.

Following Copley came Gilbert Stuart, Washington Allston, the Peales, John Trumbull, Thomas Sully, John Nagle and Chester Harding, all of whom did, at times, excellent—yes, really distinguished—work. These men, as well as Copley, Blackburn and others, were represented in the Boston Art Club's exhibition.

AMERICAN HANDICRAFT*

BY HUGER ELLIOTT

PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF HANDICRAFT SOCIETIES

A CRITIC, writing about a recent water-color exhibition, said, after studying it, that he was convinced that any one seeing it must realize that no longer could painting in water colors be considered merely as a pastime for old maids of both sexes. And the same thing may now be said of handicraft work.

In spite of the fact that the comic papers still make fun of the hand-painted sofa-pillows and the burnt-wood umbrella-stands there is an ever-growing number of people who are doing excellent work in the handicrafts; artists whose technique is perfect—whose knowledge of design is good; some of whose work can stand beside the work of the old craft masters and not make us blush for it.

Just as our sculptors are trying to educate the public with good sculpture, hoping that some day they will so raise the taste of the American people that the usual war monument of the seventies will be removed from the town square and something beautiful put in its place; just as our painters and our architects are advancing the standards in easel pictures, wall paintings, architectural structures, so the workers in the handicrafts are educating the public in the appreciation of the smaller art works.

To a Florentine of the fifteenth century it would seem curious that we should have

to speak of the handicrafts as a special subject. In those days all of the arts came under the head of the Crafts: they were all part of one great family, merely greater or lesser: the same honor was paid to the goldsmith as to the painters, and the same loving work was put upon the object made for a definite utilitarian purpose as upon the palace hall or a venerated shrine.

To the high place once occupied by the handicrafts in the estimation of the people it is the duty of the handicraft workers to restore the crafts.

The ancient handicraft Guilds had privileges which many of us would like nowadays. They were authorized to go forth and destroy evil wares and at the end of the day were dined at the common expense. How unfortunate that this is not possible in these days!

However, there is one thing to be said for the present, and this is that things which have some artistic value are now more easily procured by a greater number of people than ever before.

Take, as an example of popular art, the work in our newspapers and weekly and monthly magazines. We may not always approve of the art supplements, the magazine covers or the crude illustrations, but the standard is every day being raised. When we consider what was done four hundred years ago, or forty years ago,

*An address made at the Annual Convention of the American Federation of Arts, held in Washington, D. C., May 17, 18, 19, 1911.

and what is done to-day, we must realize that a great advance in art for the people has been made—not only in the field of illustration, but in the wider field of objects intended for daily use. Much of the credit of this is due to the great leaders in the craft movement.

Think of the many things which a person with a limited purse can buy—things which have a lot of artistic quality. Ugly house furnishings may, as we all know, still be bought, but a poor person can now get more beauty for his money than at any former period.

Now the Purist comes along and says: "This is all very well, but I would rather the people have perfectly bare walls and furniture than this loud, so-called artistic stuff." Well, the Purist is a very good person and is necessary to keep our standards high; but he must remember that the generality like good strong color—that they will have gorgeous things of some kind; and that it is not our part merely to say "All these things are bad," but our duty to say "These things are well made—This design is better than that"—and train popular taste so that the public will demand that machine-made things be beautiful.

The handicraft workers of America are helping to solve the national problem by setting high standards in their hand-made products, and the result of their efforts can be seen in the stores. Indeed the

greatest American test,—the test of the dollar,—will prove that handicraft has come to stay. You now find the most commercial stores advertising "craft work"—and though this is made by machinery it shows that there is a demand for the kind of thing first supplied by the handicraft workers.

In thus raising the standards of appreciation the craftsmen are doing for the smaller arts what the hard-working architects and the conscientious painters and sculptors are doing for the greater arts.

It is true, to be sure, that we have not perfect craftsmen throughout America. Some do good things, some poor; but we have an increasing number of workers who produce splendid work and an increasing number of people who appreciate this fine work, who desire the personal touch in the objects which they buy, a quality impossible in machine-made things, and are willing to pay for this quality.

But it must be confessed that though we have good workers who shed luster upon the calling, we have many whose lack of technique and ignorance of design retard, in some degree, the movement.

But the handicraft workers of America are struggling to do their share in the artistic uplift of America, and are preaching, consciously or unconsciously, the doctrine of the extravagance of the ugly.

THE CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

THE seventh annual convention of the American Civic Association, which was held in Washington, D. C., on December 13th, 14th and 15th, brought together several hundred representative men and women from all parts of the United States and Canada who are engaged in various phases of civic improvement. In many respects it was a notable meeting. Aside from the discussion of the various activities

fostered by the Association, such as city planning, crusades against billboards, unnecessary smoke and the house-fly, and for more trees on city and country thoroughfares as well as better street lighting, marked impetus was given to a number of new and important undertakings.

To the subject of National Parks the one evening session was exclusively devoted, with a view to inducing the crea-